



## SPIRIT AND TRUTH

Worship evokes a variety of images and emotions in people because of how intensely personal and unique the experience is for each of us. Our experiences and expectations tend to shape our understanding and vocabulary when it comes to worship.

Jesus frequently used metaphors and analogies to help people grasp the principles of life in the Kingdom of God. His analogies often highlighted the contrast between what they experienced and the new life he was inviting them to.

Using an analogy can be pretty effective in helping someone unfamiliar with worship understand it better. So, let's begin with, "The heart of worship is like sushi."

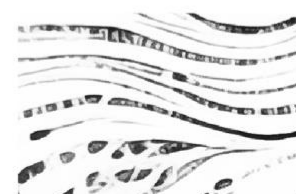
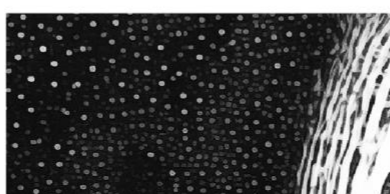
**Sushi is quite divisive. Many people do not understand how anyone could ever eat raw fish. However, for many, once they've tasted it, their attitude towards it changes.** Worship can be the same. Without experiencing it firsthand, we may find it hard to understand why others are so passionate about it or engage in the practice. Without experiencing worship ourselves, we might find worshippers' actions—such as getting lost in God's presence—confusing or even off-putting. This is especially true if we grew up in a church environment where expressive worship was rare to non-existent.

But what if those worshippers know something we don't; maybe they've experienced something we haven't. Worship, much like sushi, requires us to take that initial plunge. Only then can we truly understand the depth of joy and fulfillment it can bring.

Worship is deeply personal, yet its power lies in a regular shared experience. It's about engaging fully with God, beyond just going through the motions. As we engage, it transforms our understanding and experience of worship. When we allow ourselves to engage fully, we discover the richness and depth of worship, moving from scepticism to a place of longing for more. This transformation often happens gradually as we allow ourselves to be vulnerable and open to new experiences. The key is to remain open and willing to engage.

As we engage more deeply, we find that worship becomes a central part of our spiritual lives and transforms how we see and interact with the world around us.

After Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman, she rushes off and calls her whole community to come and meet Jesus. Many Samaritans commit to Jesus because of her testimony: "He knew all about the things I did. He knows me inside and out!" They ask Jesus to stay, and many more believe after hearing Him in person. They tell the woman, "We've heard it for ourselves and know it for sure. He's the Savior of the world!" (John 4:39-42 MSG).





In this encounter, Jesus reveals a new understanding of worship. At that time, worship was seen as a ritual or religious exercise tied to specific times and places, like the Temple in Jerusalem or Mount Gerizim in Samaria. However, Jesus introduces the idea that worship is not confined to a specific location or activity but is an experiential, personal connection with God. This is the New Testament paradigm for worship, a personal relationship made available to us all.

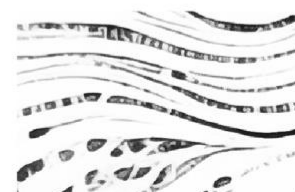
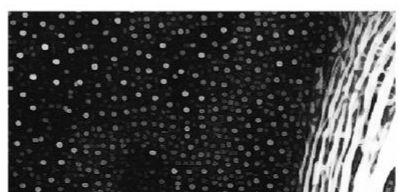
Jesus redefines worship by reframing it as a connection with God that is not tied to a specific time or place but can happen anywhere God chooses to engage with us, as seen in Genesis 22, Psalm 22:4 and 22, and Hebrews 2:12. Yet today, many of us still fall into the "Sunday Christian" mentality, viewing Sunday as a holy day dedicated to God, while living the rest of the week by worldly standards. The God we worship is far greater and more expansive than our limited perceptions. Worship happens wherever and whenever we engage with God.

Jesus introduces the Samaritan woman to worship 'in spirit and truth' (John 4:23-24). True worship is a spiritual activity occurring in God's presence. Since God has chosen to dwell within us (John 14:17b, 23; Ephesians 2:22), we are always in His presence and can worship Him anywhere. Worship is not bound by location; it's a spirit-to-spirit communication fuelled by a relationship with God rather than routine or religion. When we worship in spirit and truth, we use our spirit's unique love language to express adoration, transcending everyday words (1 Corinthians 14:2, 14, 15). This kind of worship is intimate and personal, profoundly connecting us to God.

Worship flows naturally from a Spirit-filled life (Acts 2:1-4, 11; Ephesians 5:19-20; Colossians 3:16-17). It's authentic, non-religious, and humble, with transparency and integrity, aligning with God's truth.

True worship is driven by the revelation of who God is because our understanding of God shapes our worship. The best way to know God is through Jesus (John 1:14; John 14:7, 9; Colossians 2:9). As our revelation grows, it moves our worship beyond religion and routine towards a genuine response to the Spirit's work in us. Praise is evidence that we are awake, aware, alive and well, living in awe of His worth. Praise is inner health made audible (C.S. Lewis). Inspired by the continuous revelation of who He is, true worshippers acknowledge God's worth and align their lives with His truth.

Jesus invited the Samaritan woman at the well to shift from viewing worship as a religious ritual to experiencing it as an intimate relationship. This shift requires moving from a me-centred worldview to a Christ-centred one. Christ-centred worship flows from Him (Hebrews 2:12; Psalm 22:22), is fuelled by Him (Romans 11:36; Hebrews 1:1-3a) and is directed to Him. He, in turn, joins us in glorifying the Father (Psalm 22:22; Philippians 2:11).





**SUMMARY**  
SESSION 2

Worship flows from what we know. Knowing God enables us to express His life to those around us. By walking in His truth, just being who He has made us to be, we communicate His heart to our world. (2 Corinthians 2:14-16a).

